

Maggie Blough



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"I WILL FIGHT."

ONE afternoon when school was done,
And tasks were put away
From hand and head, the merry lads
Came trooping out to play.

Their shouts and laughter filled the air,
The balls flew swiftly by —
Hoops rolled apace, and fluttering kites
Sailed slowly to the sky.

But, ah! how soon in sinful hearts
Are sinful passions stirred!
How often sport to strife is turned
By rude or thoughtless word!

"A cheat! 'twas not your turn at ball,"
Cried Bill with angry tongue;
And Bob fired up with tight-clenched hands,
For pride was sorely stung!

"A fight, a fight!" the lads called out,
"Let's have it straight and fair;"
And quick a clam'rous circle pressed
Around the angry pair.

"Yes, I WILL fight; I fancy Bill
Won't call me 'cheat' again!"
"Hurrah for Bob," cried out his friends,
And cheered with might and main.

"Nay, Robert, act a nobler part,"
Said one in quiet tone;
And firmly round Bob's lifted arms
His brother's clasp was thrown.

"If you would have a conscience clear
And show your courage true,
Act *right* yourself, and never fear
What others say and do.

"To rule one's heart, when pride is roused,
And angry passions frown,
Would be to win a harder fight
Than if you stormed a town.

"Come, Bill, dear boy, *you* raised the storm,
Just beg Bob's pardon now;
And, Robert, give a friendly hand
And clear your darkened brow."

The fight was hard, yes, harder far
Than fist to fist with Bill;
But gentleness is often strong
The storm of wrath to still.

Bill, glad at heart to be released,
Though loud in boastful show,
Was little loth to make amends
And end the quarrel so.

And Robert, backed by some who cheered
As loudly as at first,
Shook hands, and with the last "hurrah!"
The noisy throng dispersed.

But who shall tell how sweet the peace
That filled his brother's heart,
When from Bob's brightened face he saw
The evil scowls depart.

Oh, blessed they whose hearts are wise,
The cause of peace to plead;
And in her ways of pleasantness
A brother's feet to lead.

Do comrades strive? with gen'rous care
A brother's fault they screen;
With skillful love the breach repair
And step the foes between.

These are the true courageous hearts;
They fight the inward foe;
When sinners tempt, they boldly give
One brave, short answer — "No."

Sweet peacemakers! they daily fight
With sin, and sin alone;
The followers of the Prince of Peace
Who marks them for his own.

You that "*will fight*," their comrades be,
Beneath their King engage;
With anger, falsehood, greed, and sloth,
A noble war to wage.

To sneering taunt give answer calm,
Or silence firm maintain;
To doubled fist, spread open palm,
And thus the vict'ry gain.

Let evil be o'ercome with good,
From wrath and clamor cease;
And serve Him who is Lord of Hosts
As well as Prince of Peace.

Selected.

THE CHILDREN'S POET.

BY UNA LOCKE.

DID you ever hear of the boy who could not help making verses? He lived in England nearly two hundred years ago. He was a very wonderful little scholar, beginning Latin at four years of age, and making good progress. So fond was he of rhyming that he did so almost without knowing it. His father thought this a foolish habit, and tried to break him of it, but without success. At length he said he must punish him. The little boy instantly replied in a piteous tone, —

"Dear father, do some pity take,
And I will no more verses make."

His dear father saw he did not say this with the intention of disobeying him, and wisely passed it



DR. WATTS.

over. The name of this boy was Isaac Watts. This was also his father's name, and he was master of a flourishing boarding-school in Southampton. Look on your map, and you will see this town on the south coast of England, opposite the Isle of Wight. It was here, you remember, that the Pilgrim company from Holland waited for their English friends to join them before proceeding to "the wild New England shore." This was fifty-four years before Isaac Watts was born.

Isaac studied, when old enough, under the instruction of a clergyman of the Church of England, and was so fine a scholar that it was proposed to have a subscription taken up for him in order to enable him to enter one of the universities. But he thought he could not entirely adopt the belief of the English Church, and joined himself to a dissenting church; so he could not accept the offer of a university education, but went on with his studies in London. There he began to preach when twenty-four years old, but soon broke down in health, which, I am sure, is not strange, when we remember how early he began his Latin. His ill health did not prevent him from writing many books which will always be read and quoted, no doubt, as long as our language is known in the world. He was not only a very learned man, but a lover of the Lord Jesus, and a doer of his commands. He was also a most amiable and lovely man, taking great care to give no offense to any person, or denomination of Christians, by unkind, uncharitable words. While he had a pastoral office he drew large crowds to hear him, although he was a diminutive man, only about five feet in height, making in the pulpit no show of graceful gestures and fine oratory. When he prayed, he addressed God, and not the people; and so perfectly adapted to express the wants of the soul were his prayers, that it was said it was impossible to imagine how anything could be added to them or anything omitted without taking away from their perfectness. He lived very near to this great and good Father; and as we all take an impress from the friends we love the most and with whom we most associate, it is not strange that the beautiful character of the glorious Lord shone out in his life.

Besides the large number of excellent books on

theology, and for mature minds, written by this good man, there are many for the improvement of young people. Besides, he did not forget the children, nor his habit of making rhymes. In the days of your great-grandmamas, before Jane Taylor began to publish her verses, there were no poems for children in this country except those of Dr. Watts. These were as much the delight of that generation as were hers of the next and the present one. How much the mothers of that day used to sing, —

"Hush, my dear, lie still and slumber,"

to their babies! And how often they used to have to repeat, —

"Let dogs delight to bark and bite,"

to the little ones who disputed and had fallings-out in their plays! And —

"'Tis the voice of the sluggard, I heard him complain,
You have waked me too soon,"

to the little laggards at the breakfast table. And then again, —

"How doth the little busy bee
Improve each shining hour,"

to the small body who dawdled over her patch-work.

Dr. Watts was very much beloved in this country, and he returned the affection, taking great interest in the Americans, and holding correspondence with the most prominent men of his time in New England. His psalms and hymns, which were sung in the churches here, were considered of almost equal authority with the Holy Scriptures.

In 1712 Dr. Watts had so severe a sickness that his nervous system was greatly shaken, and he was in-



MONUMENT TO DR. WATTS AT SOUTHAMPTON.

vited by the Alderman of London, Sir Thomas Abney, to take up his abode in his family. His elegant seat, twelve miles from London proper, was the home of this good man for thirty-six years. This place, in the suburbs of London, is included in "London North," and is a most charming region. I have this moment before me several photographs of the objects of interest there. If you could come and see me, I would show you a picture of an arbor called "Dr. Watts's Wig," and some leaves of box and ivy, which were sent me from the Wig, which are still almost as green as ever. I have also ivy and oak and rose leaves from "Dr. Watts's Walk." In this thickly covered arbor the poet used to sit, and think, and compose hymns. A stream called "New River" flows along in front of it, and looking out upon and across it, he wrote, —

"There is a land of pure delight,
Where saints immortal reign;
Infinite day excludes the night,
And pleasures banish pain."

There everlasting spring abides,
And never withering flowers!
Death, like a narrow sea, divides
This heavenly land from ours.
Sweet fields beyond the swelling flood
Stand dressed in living green."

The "swelling flood" was the New River; and of the "living green" beyond it, my friend, who resides there and who has travelled in our country, tells me we Americans can form no idea! The rich, bright, *living* green of that highly cultivated, mist-watered land is wonderful to behold, and suggested to the sick man the land of pure delight.

In this place, at the dissenting chapel, Dr. Watts, when partially recovered, used to preach. The old chapel is taken down, and a handsome building stands on the spot, and to the same church organization, dating back to the year 1600, my friend's brother is minister. Dr. Watts preached here his last sermon, and while preaching it broke down and could not finish. His old pulpit is still in existence, being in the possession of some one in Cheshunt, as that place is called.

In this lovely region of delightful gardens full of flowers, where, just about this time, the nightingale is filling the nights with its exquisite song, and the larks and thrushes are making the mornings joyous, Dr. Watts spent the remainder of his life. How good our Lord was to him!

The accomplished woman whom he loved and wished to marry, became the wife of another. In his disappointment the poor man wrote the dolorous hymn: —

"How vain are all things here below!
How false and yet how fair!
Each pleasure hath its poison too,
And every sweet a snare!
The fondness of a creature's love,
How strong it strikes the sense!
Thither the warm affections move,
Nor can we draw them thence."

But though he had no wife or children to care for him, God gave to him the best of friends, and for his sick, dispirited days surrounded him with the most beautiful objects his wonderful power has created.

When unable to accomplish anything in active labor, he would say, "The business of a Christian is to hear the will of God as well as to do it. If I were in health, I could only be doing it, and I may bear it now." He also said, "I bless God I can lie down with comfort at night, not being solicitous whether I awake in this world or another."

He gradually sank in strength and died without pain, November 25th, 1748, in the 75th year of his age.

PUNISHMENT.

BY AUNT EMMA.

Do you believe there is to be found anywhere a child who does not know the meaning of this word? If there is one, it must be some very ignorant little heathen; it surely cannot be

one who reads these little sermons.

Your parents lay down their commands; you disobey, and what follows? Punishment, of course. Your teacher makes rules for you in school. You break these rules, and what follows? Punishment, of course. I have told you something of this before, that law was not good for anything without a punishment added to it. A little circumstance has just happened which will show you just what I mean.

I was visiting my friend, Mrs. Gray, when Charlie, her little boy, came running into the house one morning, his cheeks as red as roses, and his eyes bright as stars, panting for breath, he had been running so hard.

"O mamma, mamma," he began.

"But stop, my son, not so fast," said mamma; "where have you been?"

"Just down the street a little bit of a way, mamma, with Willie Dunning; just a little bit of

a way, mamma, 'cause you see our kites went up so far, and we had to run."

"I told you not to go outside the gate, Charlie."

"I know, mamma, but it was only two or three steps, just down to the corner, and I couldn't help it, the kite made me."

"I am sorry the playthings I give you for your pleasure make you disobey me, my son. I must take the kite away, and more than that, I can't allow you to go out any more before dinner. If you disobey me, you must be punished."

"Oh dear," sighed Charlie, "it's too bad. Willie's mamma won't punish him."

"He has not disobeyed, I suppose."

"Yes, mamma, he has, for I heard her tell him not to go outside the yard, just as you told me. She tells him every day lots of things to do or not to do, and he never thinks of minding, unless he wants to, and she never punishes him, never."

"Well, Charlie, I shall always punish you when you disobey. I cannot help what Mrs. Dunning does, but my little boy must learn to mind."

Now that is just what I want to teach you, children, about the use or meaning of punishment. Why does Mrs. Gray always punish Charlie when he disobeys? and whether he disobeys a great deal or a very little? Charlie thought it was no matter if he did go outside the gate, so long as he only went "a little bit of a way." But if he had gone a mile, his mother would not have thought it any worse. He disobeyed her command, and that was why she punished him. And she did so that he might learn to obey next time. She had no unkind feeling toward Charlie. She did not punish him because she was angry, just to pay back the wrong he had done to her. Oh no; she loves him; she makes laws or rules for his good. She knows he will only be safe and happy by obeying her, and that he will never be a good and happy man when he grows up, unless he learns while he is a little boy to obey. Every wise father and mother does the same thing; that is, punishes the disobedient child.

So God's law is meant to make us truly happy and therefore, to make it a real law, one that will accomplish what God designs by it, there must be some penalty or punishment attached to it. And that we may learn to respect it and obey it, this punishment must fall upon us when we break it. But is this so? What is the penalty of God's broken law? It is death. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die," says God. And the very first time that you did wrong on purpose, the very first time you willingly and knowingly disobeyed God, the sentence of death passed upon you. That sentence is not executed yet. You know when a wicked man is tried in court for murder, the judge passes sentence upon him; that is, he tells him that he has been found guilty of this great crime, and for it he must be hung; that he must go back to prison, and in one month from that day the punishment of the broken law will fall upon him. What a month of misery and sorrow that must be for the wretched man! Under sentence of death, waiting to have the dreaded punishment fall. He has no hope unless he is forgiven.

Now, dear children, it is just in this misery and sorrow that every sinner against God lives. He is under sentence of death, waiting till God shall see fit to execute the sentence. And the death is not that of the body alone, but of the soul, a second death, an eternal death. And we are all sinners. There is not one of us but has broken God's law many, many times. I want you to feel this.

But I do not want to leave you so. You will be very unhappy if I do not tell you that there is hope, even for the worst of us. As I have said, all are

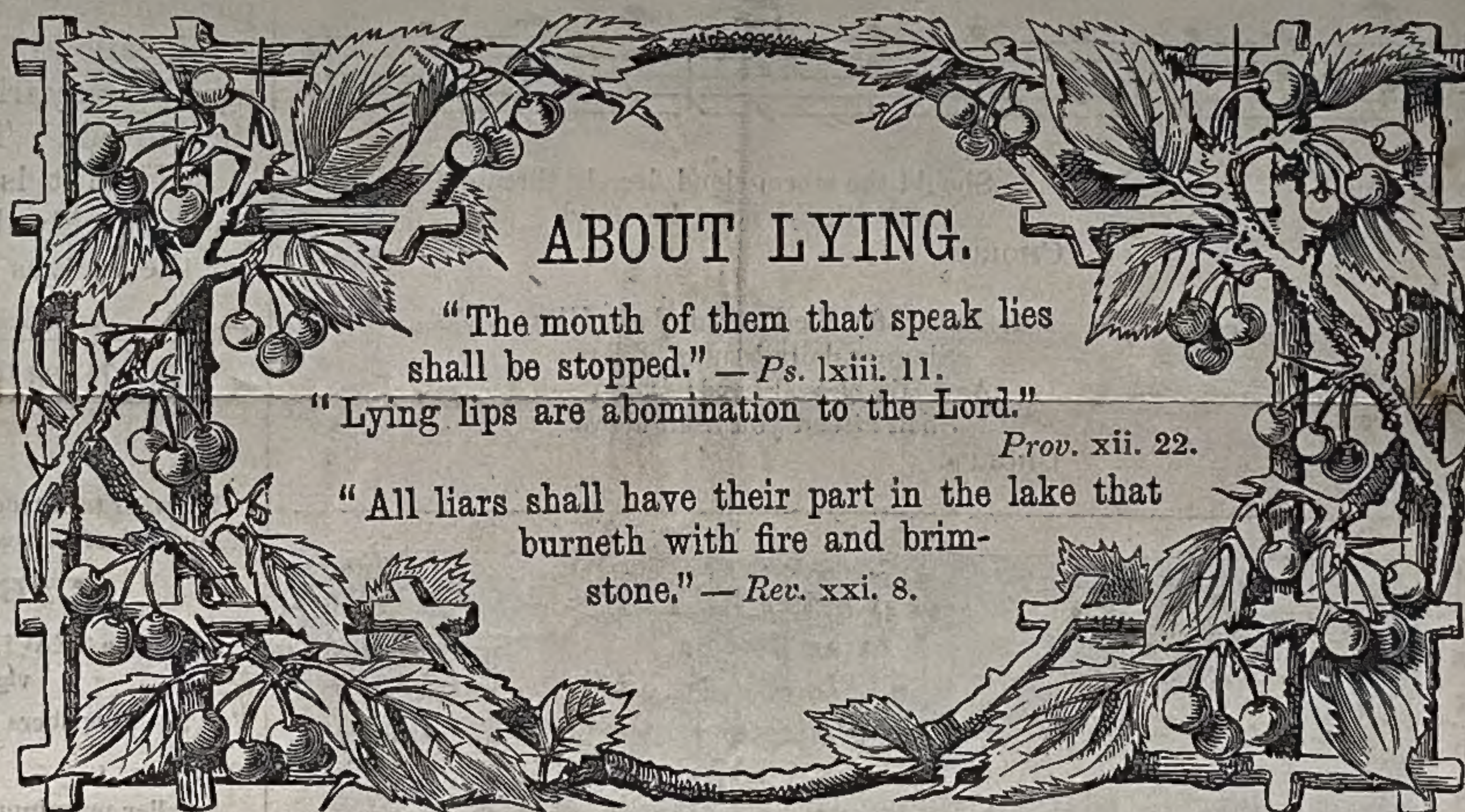
sinners. There are two kinds of sinners, however, in this world of ours, — careless, hard-hearted sinners, and those who are alarmed and sorry for their sins. There are impenitent, unbelieving sinners, and the penitent, believing ones. There are unforgiven and forgiven sinners.

God is a kind and tender Father. He does not love to punish us, but He does want us to respect and obey His law. And He has provided a way by which He can make His law to stand firm, and yet forgive the transgressor. You know the way, do you not? He gave His own dear Son to suffer the punishment of that broken law for us, and now, for His sake, He can forgive the truly repentant. Of this great and glorious way of salvation I would like to tell you more, but you already know enough to lead you to love Jesus, and to go in His name to ask for forgiveness. I hope you have done so; if not, I hope you will, so that all of us may be of the penitent, believing, forgiven sinners; no longer under sentence of death, and so no longer unhappy.

WHISTLING KATIE.

KATIE is a great whistler. The habit does not make her rough or boyish, not at all. On the contrary, she is an unusually sweet, gentle little girl.

Her whistling came about in this way. When she was very small, scarcely two years old, she had a great desire to make music like her older sisters. But her poor little fingers couldn't possibly strike the keys of the piano in a way to satisfy her delicate



ear. Neither could she remember or very well pronounce the fine words the young ladies sang. So she worked away with her pretty mouth, trying to produce the sweet sounds she loved so well, till by and by, to the astonishment of everybody in the house, she succeeded in whistling a tune!

Oh, how they all laughed!

But little Katie kept quite sober. Else she could not have done her work well.

She was four years old when I first knew her, and had become quite expert at whistling. Pretty songs, and instrumental pieces, and some slow music, came out very grandly from her red lips.

I was boarding for a little time at her papa's house when I first made her acquaintance. Often and often I opened my chamber door to see if it was possible that was Katie whistling those difficult pieces of music.

I did not generally have to look long before I caught sight of her bright eyes peeping up between the banisters of the stairs, or round the corner of the hall table, or, lying flatly upon the furry mat at the door, I would see her gazing up at the high ceiling in the upper hall. Katie likes passages.

But whistling, after all, is not Katie's greatest accomplishment. She possesses one of the tenderest of tender hearts. Nothing suffers where she is if she can relieve it. It was very pleasant, when a sick-headache or other illness confined me to my room, to have the dear little girl come in so softly inquiring, "Better now?" And when I could say,

"Yes, Katie," how earnest and honest came the words, "I am so glad!"

Katie has a cousin about her own age, who lives in a great house quite near to hers, and with whom she often exchanges visits.

One day she came home from her cousin's in great glee, bringing with her a pretty bird cage with a beautiful yellow bird in it.

It had been the little girl's desire for a long time to possess a bird. And now surely she had one. "O mamma," she said, speaking with the little breath she had left after her quick run home, "cousin found it right on the ground — this dear little bird. She said I could have it, and I might have this cage to keep it in."

"But, darling, it is a wild bird and will not love to stay in a cage when it gets warm and feels well," mamma said.

Katie's eyes drooped. But she put the cage in an open window where the sun shone and sat down to watch and wait.

Birdie soon felt the warmth and began to pick up his feathers. He looked at the bottle of seeds, at the lump of sugar stuck in between the bars of the cage, and at the dish of water provided for him, without seeming at all to appreciate the kindness.

Katie crept a little nearer and whistled softly by way of making acquaintance. But little yellow-bird had no idea what it all meant. He looked wildly around, and now no longer chilly and numb, showed great impatience at his confinement.

He began flying about in the wildest manner, knocking his head against first one side, then the other of his cage, until it seemed to poor distressed Katie he certainly would kill himself against the hard wires.

What should she do? She asked and answered the question to herself, not even asking mamma's advice. She had no need of any one to tell her; she considered. Birdie was in trouble, and she knew how to relieve him. Hurrying with all her might the moment she decided, she set the door of the cage wide open, and away flew the pretty bird, so glad to be free!

"I shouldn't want to be shut up, mamma," the little girl said,

laying her head down, just an instant, in her mother's lap.

And directly Katie was whistling and happy again, skipping through the hall. H. N. M.

JOHNNY'S DOLLAR.

THE clergyman was trying to interest the people in the increase of the ministry.

He wanted them to supply the means to educate such poor young men as would give themselves up to preaching the blessed Gospel, if only money could be provided for their teaching. He asked rich parents to give their sons to the Lord as an offering, and if they would not give their own children, to try and help others.

The next morning, as he was walking on the street, a lady approached him, and put into his hand a silver dollar. Her eyes were full of tears, and her whole frame quivered with emotion.

The money was one of the early coins of the United States Mint, and was inscribed with the date 1779.

When the lady could command her voice, she said, "This was my little Johnny's dollar. He had it in his hand when he was dying, and it rolled from his grasp upon the floor. I had intended my boy for the sacred ministry, but God took him away, and now I want this dollar, which I have kept as a precious memento, to go towards educating some young man for the holy calling."

A gentleman to whom the minister told the inci-

